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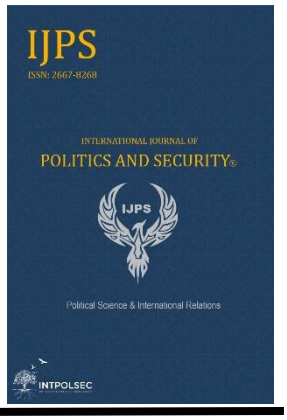

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Insurgency in Nigeria, Boko Haram's Operations and the Future Outlook

Osagwereme Martins Akowe*

Abstract

The Boko Haram insurgency has been a devastating conflict in terms of loss of lives, property, and the downfall of economic activity in Nigeria. Indeed, the Boko Haram Conflict has not only adversely affected the most populous country in Africa but also affected all countries in the Chad Basin. This research has drawn a nexus between the activities of Boko Haram insurgents in Nigeria to religious extremism, as well as some remote social and political factors that have contributed to the rise of the sect.

The research explores the different conceptions of terrorism, insurgency, and religious extremism and how they can be used to explain the nature of Boko Haram's operations. Besides, assesses the future outlook of the Boko Haram insurgency, considering the coalition of the armed terrorist group with the Islamic State West African Province and what this means for the fight against insurgency in the Chad Basin region.

Keywords: *Boko Haram, ISWAP, Insurgency, Chad, Extremism*

1. Introduction

Insurgencies have happened in various manners across the world. The Boko Haram insurgency has been a bloody socio-political clash that has unfavorably influenced Nigeria. Some principal ideas have been utilized in previous studies by scholars and security specialists to underscore the insurrection issue. It is imperative to appreciate the premise of a portion of these ideas that will be completely examined in this research.

A study[1] characterized insurgency as a revolt against an established position when those participating are not perceived as belligerents. Morris[2] seems to vary marginally on that by calling attention to the fact that not all revolts are insurgencies. The utilization of the term "insurgency" perceives the socio-political inspiration of the individuals that take an interest in it, while the expression "brigandry" involves no political force.[3] On the off chance that an uprising has minor support, taking the individuals who keep on opposing towards the finish of an armed clash when the majority of their partners have surrendered for instance, at that point

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[1] Rogerson, J. (2010). The Creation Stories: Their Ecological Potential and Problems in Horrell, D. (ed), *Ecological Hermeneutics*, (21-31). London: T&T Clark.
[2] Morris, M. (2005). Al Qaeda as Insurgency. U.S.A: United States Army College.
[3] Goldstein, E. (2003) . *Power and Stability: British Foreign Policy*. London: Routledge.

such an obstruction might be portrayed as brigandry, and the individuals who partake as scoundrels/brigands.[4]

There are numerous international laws and principles of war that impact describing an event as an insurgency. However, as Nagl[5] noted, unlike other areas covered by international law, there is no proper codification on the distinction between "insurgency" and "belligerency". Nagl ventured two reasons for this lack of proper codification. Firstly, it is elementary knowledge that international law ordinarily does not intrude on matters that are entirely within the internal affairs of a sovereign state (though it must be noted that contemporary developments such as the "responsibility to protect" have continuously subverted this traditional method). Secondly, there was a controversy between the Great Power in the Hague meeting of 1899, who regarded francstireur as unlawful fighting for capture, and smaller states which claimed that they must be considered as lawful fighters.[6]

The U.S. Defense Department[7] describes insurgency as "an orchestrated effort to overthrow the constitutional government by using subversive and armed conflicts". A structure including both insurgency and counterinsurgency is provided in the US Counter-insurgency Field Manual.

According to Anderson[8], every insurgency includes terrorism; he notes that there is no common concept of terrorism. However, its definition is not in international law, the United Nations (UN) has many working definitions, and these include one drafted by the United Nations Policy Working Group on Terrorism and the United Nations. In its 2002 Report to the United Nation's Secretary-General, the operational group stated that:

> *"It is intended to cause emotional and deadly harm to citizens and to conceive of an environment of fear towards a political or ideological purpose (whether irreligious or religious); it is an unlawful act, but it is more than just criminality and without asking for a detailed description of terrorism, it would be helpful to outline some of the vast features of the singularity. Terrorism is, in most cases, supported by the political elite. We need to consider its political dynamics to understand the issue of terrorism and its fundamental crime and psychology, and the United Nations needs to discuss all sides of this equation".*[9]

[4] Ibid.
[5] Nagl, J. (2006). US counter insurgency. New York: 24 Press.
[6] Ibid.
[7] Ibid.
[8] Aremu, I. (2003). Development and Political Stability in Kwanashie, A (Ed), Politics and Political Power Relations in Nigeria (pp.248-260). Lagos: Dat and Partners Logistic Ltd.
[9] Ibid.

Apart from the earlier discussed conflict between the depiction of "insurgency" and "belligerency", there is another set of conflicting terms often used interchangeably – "insurgency" and "terrorism". Michael F. Morris in his winning essay at the 24th Annual United States Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Strategic Essay Contest, put it as follows:

> *"[Pure terrorist group] can follow political, even revolutionary agendas, but their violence replaces rather than complements the political agenda. Their convert wing is carrying out assaults on military forces with techniques such as airstrikes and ambushes, as well as acts of terror such as attacks that cause intentional civilian casualties"*[10]

It is submitted that the usage or non-use of terror does not describe insurgency, but that the organizational features have historically provided the means to conflate the two terms. Insurgencies usually field military powers in magnitudes greater than those of terrorist organizations.[11] As Morris postulated, an insurgent group can have political intent and can even be organized in a manner that enables them to provide social services. Often, these insurgent groups have an open and sometimes legal political wing.

Bringing this background into the Nigerian context, the case of insurgency by the Boko Haram terrorist group has largely morphed into a claim for Nigerian territory and other chunks of West African countries around the Chad region.

2. Boko Haram Operations in Nigeria

Nigeria, as a country with a population of over 180 million people across 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) divided into 774 (seven hundred and seventy-four) local government areas, is made up of people from different ethnic and religious persuasions.[12] Nigeria's political, economic, social, and religious tendencies all add to the country's complexity as a nation-state.

Since its independence, Nigeria has experienced several religious and ethnic crises of varying degrees and intensity.[13]

[10] Morris, M. (2005). Al Qaeda as Insurgency. U.S.A: United States Army College.
[11] Ibid.
[12] Oyeniyi, B. (2012). Political Narratives as Historical Realities: is Jos conflict an Ethno–Religions conflict? In Albert, I. (ed), A History of Social conflict and conflict Management in Nigeria, (35-51). Ibadan: John Archers.
[13] Gilbert, L. (2014). The Prolongation of Boko Haram Insurgency in Nigeria: The International Dimensions. Research on Humanities and Social Science, 4 (11) 150-156.

Previous insurgencies in Nigeria have varied in scale, complexity, and severity, but Boko Haram stands out because they are a faceless community with contradictory ideologies.

In 2009, the government cracked down on its members, but this has not stopped its subsequent evolution, its increasing frequency, and the geographical scope of its attack, indicating that the group has now grown past its original spheres of activity and religious composition and now includes criminal elements, vagabonds, discontented politicians and not just the Islamic extremists who made up its fold at inception.[14]

Boko Haram intends to create an Islamic state in the sovereign state of Nigeria. It opposes Nigerian society's westernization and the accumulation of the country's resources among associates of a tiny political elite, primarily in the southern part of the country predominated by Christians[15]. Local authorities' imposition of sharia law, which began in Zamfara in January 2000 and spread to 12 northern states in Nigeria by late 2002, may have facilitated relations between Boko Haram and political leaders, but the community considers it to be corrupted[16]. Boko Haram is ideologically isolated and lacks mainstream support from the general population and the majority of Muslim leaders in the country[17]. It is critical to comprehend Boko Haram's organization and function to properly assess the community.

Despite having a hierarchical and graded structure with a single overall leader, Boko Haram often acts as a covert cell system with a network of structures. The organization's limits are hazy; in many situations, leadership is directive, and in others, it is more inspiring. The organization acts as an insurgent and guerrilla army, with units ranging in size from 300 to 500 fighters[18]. The total number of fighters is estimated to be between 5,000 and 9,000.

Mailafia[19] highlighted that Abubakar Shekau is the overall religious leader of Boko Haram and he preaches to his followers daily in addition to his operational leadership. Under Executive Order 13224, the US Department of State named Abubakar Shekau as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist in 2012... Boko Haram's organizational capabilities have improved under Shekau's leadership. Momodu Bama, who was appointed second in command when

[14] Okemi, M. (2013). Boko Haram: A Religious Sect or Terrorist Organization. Global Journal of Politics and Law Research, 3 (9) 237-241.
[15] Ottuh, P. and Idjakpo, O. (2010). The Boko Haram Praxis: A Critical Appraisal of the Nigerian Experience. The Humanities and Dilemma of Contemporary Africa, November 24th-26th, 91-100.
[16] The Nation, Thursday, August 16. 2012: p.23
[17] Vanguard, Lagos Thursday, September 1, 2011:4-5
[18] Suleiman, T. (2012). The wages of evil. TELL, May 14, pp 44-45, 48, 50-51.
[19] Mailafia, O. (2013). Conflict and Insurgency in Nigeria. Available at http\\ureports.com, accessed on 20/07/2015

Abubakar Shekau took over as the overall leader, is another notable leader. In 2013, Bama was assassinated. Abba was another regional leader who was assassinated. Aminu Sadiq Ogwechue is most likely a regional leader who has been arrested in connection with the 2014 Chibok girls kidnapping and as an alleged mastermind of the April 2014 Abuja bombing.

If various reports from the Nigerian Defense Ministry are to be believed, Abubakar Shekau may have been killed in combat since 2014, enabling the name to act as a title to mislead Nigerian military forces. In 2015, Chad's President, Idris Derby, said that Boko Haram has a new leader who is not Shekau, but the group quickly refuted this claim in a video[20] Both of these allegations, however, are unverifiable; Boko Haram has always released videos and statements to refute these claims, claiming that Abubakar Shekau is still alive and well.[21] Whether this is true or not is difficult to state with certainty.

In all this, it is critical to investigate how Boko Haram is financed to understand how the sect has risen to such importance over the years; funding is critical to the terrorist group's continued existence. While it is difficult to say with certainty how the insurgency is funded, one thing is certain: it does not come from a single source.

Kidnappings, robbery, and extortion provide support for Boko Haram[22]. It was reported that Boko Haram terrorists abducted a family of seven French terrorists on vacation in Cameroon in early 2013. The kidnappers freed the captured hostages, along with 16 other hostages, two months later in exchange for a $3.15 million ransom. According to newspaper reports in Nigeria, Boko Haram receives as much “as a $1 million ransom for each wealthy Nigerian or foreigner kidnapped”.[23] Couriers transport cash, ensuring that it is difficult to monitor, and contact is done physically. They work in such a way that little money is needed to carry out attacks, and it is argued that this includes paying local youths to monitor army movements.[24] Furthermore, the party is still well-supplied thanks to supplies confiscated from fleeing soldiers. Boko Haram also extorts local governments; according to a Boko Haram

[20] Channels News @ 10 May 4th, 2012.
[21] See Note 20.
[22] Isakpa,P. (2011). Bomb Blast, Boko Haram and Democrats at the gate. Business Day, August 29, pp.159-200.
[23] Ibid.
[24] Alozieuwa, S. (2011). Contending Theories on Nigeria’s Security Challenges in the Era of Politics. The Peace and Conflict Review, nd, 1-20.

spokesperson, some former northern governors paid the party monthly to stop attacks on their states.[25]

Boko Haram has also been linked with cocaine trafficking.[26] However, according to some studies, there seems to be insufficient evidence to support this funding method. In 2012, Cockayne, a senior fellow at the International Peace Institute and a former Co-Director of the Centre on Global Counterterrorism Cooperation wrote:

Carrier and Klantsching (2012, 16) vigorously downplay the effect of cocaine trafficking on West African governance, which is surprising given their understanding of the contested existence of most African governments. Just three case studies were used: Guinea–Bissau, Lesotho, and Nigeria. "Governmental complicity in the African drug trade is rare," the authors conclude, and "repression is the dominant paradigm."[27]

Boko Haram raises funds by importing drugs from Latin American drug cartels, according to Carson,[28] a terrorist finance specialist. However, it appears that nobody wants to admit that cocaine reaches Europe through West Africa and that it is a lucrative venture for Islamic terrorist organizations. Boko Haram also employs other smuggling methods. According to an Annual Defense Institute report, the Boko Haram group has joined other criminal organizations in Africa in the billion-dollar elephant and rhino poaching industry.[29]

Donations from Islamist sympathizers are another source of funding for Boko Haram. Boko Haram obtained the majority of its funding after its formation from residents and donors who backed its goals of enforcing Islamic rule and ridding Nigeria of any form of Western influence.[30] Boko Haram has recently expanded its funding sources by enlisting the help of international donors as well as other business projects such as bogus charity organizations. In February 2012, recently arrested officials revealed that while the organization initially relied on member donations, its links to Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb allowed it to obtain funding from donors in the United Kingdom and Saudi Arabia.[31] Surprisingly, Boko Haram hides its

[25] Sahara Reporters, 16 and 1 May, 2014: 20.
[26] Crenshaw, M. (2008). Terrorism as an international problem, in Norwitz, H (Ed), The History, influence, and Future of Armed group around the world. New York: Oxford Press.
[27] Ibid.
[28] Carson, J. (2012). Nigeria, one year After Elections: US on Boko Haram, prepared for Centre for Strategic and International Studies, Washington DC. April 9, pp. 15.
[29] Ibid.
[30] Ibid.
[31] Okemi, M. (2013). Boko Haram: A Religious Sect or Terrorist Organization. Global Journal of Politics and Law Research, 3 (9) 237-241.

financial sources by using a highly decentralized distribution network. The organization uses the *Hawala* model of Islamic money transfer, which is predicated on an honor system and a global chain of agents, and this makes it extremely difficult to monitor the group's finances.[32] The Boko Haram insurgency is likely to be funded from these and other sources.

It was tough to determine if Boko Haram had any links to other foreign terrorist networks such as Al Qaeda at the start of the insurgency, it seems to be more of a bandwagon effect to raise publicity.[33] Boko Haram, on the other hand, has recently been linked to other foreign terrorist organizations, according to new evidence. Boko Haram has been linked to al-Qaeda and its regional affiliates since at least 2002. According to "A Study on Boko Haram for the International Crisis Group",[34] the late Osama bin Laden donated $3 million to terrorist organizations in Nigeria as seed money to finance the propagation of his philosophies, and some of this fund was used to help promote the Boko Haram group's earlier operations. Due to a lack of evidence, the credibility of a statement published by the Nigerian daily newspaper Vanguard in which Boko Haram's then "acting leader," Sanni Umaru, declares that "Boko Haram is just a variant of Al-Qaeda" and that the sect has "started a jihad in Nigeria" and will soon carry out bomb attacks in major Nigerian cities were thrown out[35] is not sufficient to justify that link. However, correspondences between Osama bin Laden and the Boko Haram terrorist group were said to have been found in Bin Laden's compound after the raid that killed him in 2011.

When the Nigerian government attacked Boko Haram in July 2009, al–Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) issued a declaration of support for the organization, and its members dispersed to different Al–Qaeda factions. Abubakar Shekau, the leader of Boko Haram, praised and publicly commended Al-Qaeda and also expressed condolences on the "martyrdom" of two top Iraqi al-Qaeda leaders in July 2010.[36] The US State Department classified Khahd al-Barnawi and Abubakar Adam Kambar as lead terrorists with "links to Boko Haram and solid ties to al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb" in June 2012, at the same time when Abubakar Shekau, the Boko Haram leader was designated as a terrorist. Similar incentives were given to leaders

[32] Rogerson, J. (2010). The Creation Stories: Their Ecological Potential and Problems in Horrell, D. (ed), Ecological Hermeneutics, (21-31). London: T&T Clark.
[33] See note 16.
[34] Ibid.
[35] Bartolotta, C. (2011). Terrorism in Nigeria: The Rise of Boko Haram. The Whitehead Journal of Diplomacy and International Relations, 5 (1), 44-57.
[36] Aro, O. (2013). Boko Haram Insurgency in Nigeria: Its Implication and way forward toward avoidance of Future Insurgency. International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications, 3 (11) 1-8).

in AQIM and its offshoots in June 2013, when the “Rewards for Justice” initiative offered to give out a $7 million bounty for knowledge leading to the arrest of Shekau.[37] Shekau was charged with "expressing solidarity with al-Qaeda and threatening the United States," and there are reported communications, training programs, weapons, and other links between Boko Haram, on one hand, the al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), the al-Shabaab, and the al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), that could improve and enhance Boko Haram's capacity to carry out terrorist attacks, and that these three organizations are interconnected.[38]

The United Nations Security Council also holds the position that Boko Haram has strong links with al-Qaeda. In May 2014, when the UNSC listed Boko Haram under the al-Qaeda sanctions that it imposed, the UNSC noted that Boko Haram has sustained a relationship with AQIM for training support and material needs, as well as gaining useful expertise on improvised explosive device construction from AQIM. Abu Musab Abdel Wadoud, the leader of AQIM, one of al-regional Qaeda's branches, is reported to have sworn an oath of allegiance to the senior leadership of al-Qaeda.[39]

Nevertheless, it is critical to note that the al-Qaeda central unit has never formally recognized Boko Haram as its affiliate, and al-Qaeda did not praise the group after the Chibok schoolgirls were kidnapped, leading some observers to believe that the group was too brutal and violent in its operations for Al-Qaeda.[40] The exact current status of relations between Boko Haram and al-Qaeda is unknown, and the form and function of al-Qaeda's relationship with affiliates is still a subject of discussion within the US intelligence and counterintelligence community. it is noteworthy that should AQIM and Boko Haram join efforts and coordinate their operations and attacks, the West African subregion that is already marked by insecurity and instability would face additional threats from these terrorist organizations. Not just because of the continuous violence of Boko Haram within the Nigeria space, but also as a result of the group’s possible networks and relationship with AQIM, the North African al-Qaeda offshoot.

Abubakar Shekau, the Boko Haram leader released a 16-minute video in July 2014, in which he expressed support for ISIL's Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, al-Ayman Qaeda's Al-Zawahiri,

[37] Omankhanlen, O. And Babajide, J. (2012) Boko Haram Finding: Nigeria may face International Sanctions. http://www.nncpo.netindex.com, accessed on 06/07/205
[38] Gilbert, L. (2014). The Prolongation of Boko Haram Insurgency in Nigeria: The International Dimensions. Research on Humanities and Social Science, 4 (11) 150-156.
[39] Ibid.
[40] Walker A. (2012). What is Boko Haram, US institute of Peace (VSIP) 3, February, 2014.

and Afghan Taliban leaders Mullah Omar. Later on, in March 2015, Shekau officially announced and pledged Boko Haram's allegiance to ISIL, and the same was accepted by ISIL's spokesman some days later. Although establishing those relations and their exact nature may be difficult, Nigerians appear to be secure in their presence. The involvement of highly educated former University lecturers among the sect's members, as well as the sect's heavy and sophisticated weapons, and how they carry out sophisticated attacks, all support those claims.

The most well-known position of Boko Haram is its outright rejection of Western education. However, the term "*Boko Haram*" refers to a wider criticism of Nigerian culture that targets the alleged fruits of such colleges. Notably, Boko Haram is not a solitary group that resents Nigeria's highly educated elites for failing to provide prosperity for the country's population. Many Nigerians also decry the government's pervasive corruption.

Some Muslims in the Northern part of the country, where classical Quranic and Islamic education is a strong social force, have diverse thoughts about Western-style learning institutions. However, secondary and tertiary education are valued qualifications, and Northerners are proud of their universities and colleges. Some Northern Muslims, on the other hand, claim that Western schools fail to instill Islamic orientations and values in their students. Boko Haram is an especially extreme example of this latter mindset. It opposes compromises like "Islamiyya" colleges, which combine both Western-style government education and Islamic religious education.

Mohammed Yusuf, the founder of the sect was dissatisfied with the quality and outcomes of Western education. Darwinism, he said, was incompatible with the Quran. Muslim children were taught to imitate the mannerisms of Jews and Christians in schools. At school, children of various genders interacted, encouraging "fornication, lesbianism, homosexuality, and other [corruptions]".[41] Yusuf argued that British colonialism's "Christianizing" schools were not in any way different from the postcolonial government-established schools, but that the promise of material benefits has blinded Muslims to the extent that they cannot stick to the truth "Because of love for this world, many people's hearts have been saturated with the love of these schools until they do not see in them that which contradicts [Islam's] law". "Our movement rejects work under any government that rules by something other than what God has

[41] Ibid.

revealed".[42] Yusuf's views on intra-Muslim solidarity, democracy, and Western-style education were all bundled together in one package.

In the background of Northern Nigeria, Yusuf's Islamist vision was serious. There are many Northern Muslims who claim that Islam offers policy-making agendas that can affect the general life of citizens in a variety of ways. Despite this, only a few influential Nigerians advocate for a Sharia Islamic state. The enforcement of sharia was led by politicians from large, non-Islamist political parties, with support from a wide range of groups, including Salafis, Sufis, and unaffiliated Muslims. Many Sharia supporters believed it was consistent with a federal, representative government (Brandon Kendhammer)—rather than a theocracy ruled by unelected clerics, they advocated for elected officials to enact Islamic law.

In Nigeria today, some Muslim activists argue that at the federal and state level, there should be a co-existence of "Islamic" banks, courts, state-sponsored or subsidized pilgrimages, and other formal institutions. Non-jihadi Salafis, on the other hand, sometimes hold government positions or provide public "advice" to leaders, suggesting that they support electoral politics and a secular system for government.

For Boko Haram, a complete dedication to the concept of Islam is a social blueprint required for participation in politics. "The shari'a of Islam is a fine and full shari'a," Yusuf wrote. It is acceptable at all times and in all places around the world. He lamented,

We see a state in which Muslims are living, but they refuse the Islamic shari'a in its totality and put in its place the system of democracy. And we see people with the name 'ulama' [scholars] calling for democracy and defending it and making ugly refutations against the people who call others to follow the law of Allah.

According to Yusuf, democracy pits the people against God as a source of authority. He warned that majority rule in the form of democracy allows agreement and mistakes to be made, while Islam is predicated on total obedience and submission to the Quran and Sunna. For example, he argued that "freedom of belief" provided for a situation of apostasy from Islam. Condemning democracy was not enough; a real Muslim had to condemn it. Democracy is "the school of the infidels," according to Yusuf, and "following it, engaging with it, or using its structure is unbelief".[43] Shekau, like Yusuf, ignores an entire set of concepts. He questioned

[42] Ibid.
[43] See note 18.

President Goodluck Jonathan's portrayal of Boko Haram as a "cancer" in a 2012 video and proposed a counter-epidemiological metaphor:

The disease is unbelief, and as Allah says, “Disorder is worse than killing” (Qur’an 2:191)… Everyone knows democracy is unbelief, and everyone knows the Constitution is unbelief, and everyone knows that there are things Allah has forbidden in the Qur’an, and that is forbidden in countless hadiths of the Prophet, that is going on in Western schools…We haven’t forbidden anything, we haven’t told the Muslim community to abandon anything, we simply stand on the path of truth.

Shekau considered Western-style schooling to be sinful not only because of its academic matter but also because of its political implications. Shekau compared his confidence in God with the National Pledge recited in government schools in one post, telling listeners, “You are worshipping the nation”. The "*disorder*" that the Quran opposes has taken the form of a heretical scheme for Shekau.

Jinkai and the Indigenous of Numa in Adamawa state say that Boko Haram is currently led by Abubakar Shekau and estimates that there are between 7,000 and 10,000 fighters in the group.[44] According to Morgan (2015; 22), the group originally had ties to al-Qaeda, but in 2014, Boko Haram voiced its support for ISIL - the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (popularly known today as ISIS) and eventually declared its formal allegiance to ISIS in March 2015.

In reviewing the success of Boko Haram, it is noteworthy that, following its formation in 2002, Boko Haram's increasing radicalism led to a major ferocious and violent rebellion in July 2009. This ultimately led to the arrest, detention, and eventual execution of Mohammed Yusuf, the Boko Haram leader.

After Yusuf’s death, Boko Haram announced its sudden revival by organizing a mass jailbreak in September 2010. This was quickly followed by increasing coordinated destructions and attacks primarily on indulgent targets. In 2011, these attacks advanced 2011 to suicide bombings of federal offices and government buildings such as the Police Headquarters and the United Nations Office in FCT, Abuja.

The spate of these attacks especially in 2012, led the Government to declare a state of emergency over some Northern States, this was eventually expanded to include the entire

[44] Isakpa,P. (2011). Bomb Blast, Boko Haram and Democrats at the gate. Business Day, August 29, pp.159-200.

northeast of Nigeria in the following year. This also led to a marked rise in violations of human rights by both security forces and militant terror groups. According to Newman,[45] Boko Haram killed over 13,000 civilians between 2009 and 2015, including about 10,000 civilians in 2014, mostly in north-eastern Nigeria. Michelle and Haruna[46] argue profoundly that over 1.5 million Nigerians have been displaced from their homes and locations by the resulting violence.

Gilbert[47] has argued that the ongoing Boko Haram insurgencies in Nigeria's North-East geopolitical region, which started as sectary religious activity, have developed into unrest with worldwide links and connections, making it difficult for the government of Nigeria to quell. The rise of a fundamentalist Islamic sect continues to lead to the flight of the safety and protection of the majority of Nigerians living in the North East, particularly Christians.[48]

Since the beginning of the terrorist actions of the sect, they have used several methods to terrorize the public. Most northern Nigerian states have been affected, but Borno, Adamawa, Kaduna, Bauchi, FCT (Abuja), Kano, Yobe, and Plateau states have been the hardest hit.[49] Okami[50] argues that in Nigeria, the group is often viewed as a religious sect, partly because of the ambiguity of its classification or designation or the fear that the group has generated. Farouk[51] argues that Boko Haram was founded as an Islamic group, but has over time become a sect because of its own beliefs or practices that distinguished it from pure Islam. Okami[52] is often associated with the fact that the group was birthed around 2002 as a religious sect but has gradually developed into a full-blown terrorist organization, especially through its implementation and deployment of terror tactics. The question as to when it developed into a terror organization and whether there is a consensus among academics as to when the members descended into extremism remains a question.

The dynamics of the emergence of the Boko Haram sect can also be said to have been strongly influenced by institutional vulnerabilities and factionalized political elitism in some

[45] Newman, P. (2003). The Encyclopaedia of Etymology. London: Mega Chad Research Network.
[46] McFate, M. (2009). The Memory of War: Tribes and the Legitimate Use of Force in the Fight against Pirates, Terrorists and War Lords. New York: Skyhorse Publishing.
[47] Gilbert, L. (2014). The Prolongation of Boko Haram Insurgency in Nigeria: The International Dimensions. *Research on Humanities and Social Science*, 4 (11) 150-156.
[48] Nwakaudu, M. (2012). Boko Haram and National Development. http:// www. vanguard. com, accessed on 25/05/2015.
[49] Ibid.
[50] Okemi, M. (2013). Boko Haram: A Religious Sect or Terrorist Organization. Global Journal of Politics and Law Research, 3 (9) 237-241.
[51] Ibid.
[52] Ibid.

states. In his work on the rise of the Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria and the political elites, he attributed the rise of the sect to four conjunctive but gradual proposals; the defense of sect identity at the sub-national level as an implication of factional politics at the national level; an increase in the relevance of sect identity due to the importance attributed to them by political groups; identity groups, upon gaining political relevance, makes extremist demands sparking antagonism among the ruling political elites; and a partial democracy is installed which cannot adequately stem the rise of fundamentalist insurgencies leading to fractionalization along identity lines.

3. Contributory Factors of Insurgency in Nigeria

Terrorism, or insurgency as may be described in the Nigerian instance, is thought to originate from a variety of sources, according to several scholars. As a result, it's critical to investigate this on an individual and community level. Experts have differentiated rational, psychological, and cultural roots of terrorism at the personal level. According to Simonsen and Jeremy,[53] realistic terrorists consider their objectives and choices, weighing the pros and cons. Terrorism is motivated psychologically by the terrorist's discontent with his or her life and achievements. Terrorism can emerge from a climate of political activism when a group aims to attract the attention of a government or community to the protests of an activist social movement. Other causes would include:

a. Religious motivation: According to Hoffman,[54] religion has been a major motivator for several terrorist groups in Africa. Those who advocate and champion some radical view or opinion of Islam are disproportionately targeted among the organizations and individuals who have used religion as their inspiration to commit terrorist violence. The importance of extreme-right Christian organizations, on the other hand, is emphasized. The prevalence and importance of religiously inspired terrorist organizations are noteworthy during the timeframe generally attributed to the rise of new terrorism. There has been an increase in the trend of religiously motivated terrorist groups in comparison to the total number of terrorist organizations in the world. As research shows, the numbers increased from less than 4% in 1980 to 42% by the mid-1990s. In support of this, the study[55] claimed that religious fanaticism produces hostile environments for terrorism. Arms of war proliferation: Terrorism has been fueled by the

[53] Ibid.
[54] Ibid.
[55] Ibid.

availability and use of weapons of mass destruction and/or damage, such as chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) weapons. Some claim that media developments have driven terrorists to become more aggressive and spectacular as a result of viewer desensitization.[56] Another study,[57] which disagrees with the aforementioned thesis, believes that terrorist acts are motivated by social and political inequality. When people are seeking to correct what they consider to be a social, political, or historical wrong, such as when their land or rights have been taken away from them or denied to them, they turn to terrorism.

b. Corruption: Nigerian society is rife with corruption, which can be seen in any area of the economy (both private and public). The ruling government has struggled to carry out its responsibilities because officials are preoccupied with amassing money at the expense of society. The pervasiveness of corruption in Nigeria led Transparency International to rank Nigeria as one of the world's most corrupt countries in 2012, ranking 139th out of 176 countries assessed.

c. Unemployment: As a result of unemployment, terrorist attacks have sprung up. This has become a serious problem in the country, resulting in long-term joblessness for our graduates, discontent, and a desire to engage in activities that are harmful to society. In 2014, Nigeria's high unemployment rate resulted in the deaths of 16 job seekers who died in a stampede as 500,000 unemployed youths rushed to apply for 5000 vacancies at the Nigeria Immigration Service. The World Bank estimated in 2014 that about 80% of people under 24 were unemployed.

d. Weak institutional structure: The institutional framework in place at all three levels of government in Nigeria is so pathetic that policies are haphazardly implemented; as a result, the government is unable to provide society with public goods, and Nigeria is listed as a weak state. A "weak state" is a country whose government has collapsed to the point that it is unable to provide basic public goods to its citizens, such as defense, health care, and legal in situ. Nigeria's poor state structure has made it impossible for the government to deal with natural disasters and violent outbursts.

e. Poverty: The vicious cycle of poverty is still ravaging Nigerian society, with the majority of people unable to afford three square meals a day. According to Campbell and

[56] Newman, P. (2003). The Encyclopaedia of Etymology. London: Mega Chad Research Network.
[57] 35

Bunche (2011; 23), the majority of Nigerians' living conditions have only marginally improved since 1970. According to the National Bureau of Statistics, 25 percent of Nigerians lived in poverty in 1980, and this number has risen to 72 percent in 2010.

Nigeria's poverty rate rose from "54.7 percent in 2004 to 60.9 percent in 2010", according to estimates released by the Nigerian Bureau of Statistics (NBS) in early 2013. In 2011, 100 million Nigerians were in absolute poverty, with another 12.6 million Nigerians in a relatively poor situation. Young people, especially those living in northern Nigeria, are the worst affected by these maladies.[58] Considering the level of poverty in the north, it seems that the Boko Haram insurgency is being used as a means of protest to draw local and foreign attention to the dire situation of the region, as well as a bait to attract the poorest into joining the sect. Elegbe noted "In the north, unemployment is higher than in the south. When you combine this situation with radical Islam's pledge of a better life for martyrs, it's easy to see why the north is becoming increasingly violent". Komolafe also claims that, even if poverty and unemployment aren't the primary causes of radicalization in Nigeria, "the propensity to produce suicide bombers is greater in a society characterized by mass deprivation and joblessness than in a community where the majority of people's basic needs of food, education, health, housing, and sanitation are met".[59] Although there is a common feeling of alienation from mainstream society that has become common among youths in the society, this rarely leads to an individual adopting the identity of a terrorist or taking to suicide bombing. However, as argued,[60] "when feelings of disenfranchisement are combined with fervent adherence to traditional, dichotomous "us versus them" religious principles justifying violence against those perceived to threaten one's religious or cultural group, a strong prioritization of the group over the person, and a belief that one's group is morally superior to the group being at odds, justify violence against those perceived to threaten one's religious or cultural".

Boko Haram supporters, on the other hand, want to 'return' to a community in which Western/Modern knowledge and education are banned. These adherents believe that a world that has been "cleansed" would better serve all their needs (especially spiritual and material needs). This echoes the views expressed that "groups trying to fulfill their identity and security

[58] Onuaha, F. (2012). The Audacity of the Boko Haram: Background, Analysis and the Emerging Trend. Security Journal, 2(25), 134-151.
[59] Onuaha, F. (2012). The Audacity of the Boko Haram: Background, Analysis and the Emerging Trend. Security Journal, 2(25), 134-151.
[60] Ibid.

needs through confrontation are seeking reform in the framework of their society." While poverty and unemployment aren't always linked to youth abuse and radicalization, as the findings have shown, Onuoha's argument[61] that "privation and other frustrating conditions of life make youth highly susceptible to exploitation by extremist ideologues" is important to remember. Expatiating on the situation in Palestine noted that the average suicide terrorist was just a "young, insecure individual with strong religious affiliations... (who) had been skillfully exploited to persuade him into participating in the terrorist attack."

Apart from these explanations, Boko Haram's sudden violent turn can be retraced to the unlawful and extrajudicial killings of its Ustaz Mohammed Yusuf, the group's founder, and many of his supporters. An understanding of "the psychology of revenge" is one of the most critical aspects of comprehending why people sometimes become ultra-radical. Catalyst incidents (violent actions considered to be unjust) elicit intense feelings of anger as well as a strong psychological urge for vengeance and retaliation. Using the Boko Haram situation as a case in point, the unlawful killing of their founder acted as a trigger for pre-existing hostilities stemming from arbitrary and unjustifiable arrests, torture of arrested suspects, and sometimes execution of group members by state enforcement agents and security forces.

Despite the above assaults, the Nigerian military and the Multinational Joint Force have launched a counter-insurgency campaign against Boko Haram. The army appears to have regained its steam after a slow start due to a shortage of resources and corruption in the ranks and files of the Nigerian military. For example in March 2015, Boko Haram lost control of some of its captured territories in Northern Nigeria such as the towns Gwoza (thought to be its headquarters) and Bama to the Nigerian army. The Military announced that they had reclaimed all 14 districts earlier held by Boko Haram. In April 2015, the Nigerian military overran four Boko Haram camps in the Sambisa forest, freeing nearly 300 women. Boko Haram is thought to have fled to the Mandara mountains on the Nigerian-Cameroonian frontier. Furthermore, the Nigerian military's six-week bombardment of Boko Haram before the 2015 general elections, which was continued after the elections, is thought to have weakened Boko Haram's control.

President Muhammadu Buhari addressed in his inaugural that the Army command will be relocated to Maiduguri. Since then, the Nigerian army has had several victories. The

[61] Onuaha, F. (2012). The Audacity of the Boko Haram: Background, Analysis and the Emerging Trend. Security Journal, 2(25), 134-151.

Nigerian army was confirmed to have demolished over 20 fortified Boko Haram camps in Borno State on October 25, 2015. If the current pace is maintained, local vigilante organizations, also known as Civilian JTF, will likely be able to put an end to Boko Haram's attacks soon. On the 12th of September 2015, for example, scores of Boko Haram members were confirmed to have surrounded the Nigerian military.

The Boko Haram insurgency has carried out several attacks in Nigeria, claiming many lives and destroying many properties. Nigeria is gradually becoming a dangerous terrorist-infested country just like Afghanistan and others where it has become almost normal for people to wake up every day to hear or see terrorist attacks.

In the study and analysis of terrorism, it is factual that most contemporary terrorism exhibits an international bent, this has necessitated the formulation of mechanisms to prevent terrorism on an international scale. With specific regard to Boko Haram, these international mechanisms have taken the form of foreign governments and organizations aiding the Nigerian government in its efforts to fight terrorism. Often, the assistance comes either as money, intelligence, manpower, arms, ammunition, or a combination of some of the above-listed resources.[62] One of how terrorism can be thwarted is by identifying their sources of weapons and necessities and also cutting off the terrorists' lines of communication. A government's counter-terrorism performance is defined by its effective use of resources at its disposal. These resources include finance, military, land reforms, external alliances, power, and organizational hierarchy. At the international, regional, and bilateral levels, there are several international policies and legal initiatives targeted at promoting and strengthening international cooperation against practices such as attacks on open-source software, aircraft hijacking, and so on.

4. The Future Outlook

In Nigeria today, some Muslim activists argue that at the federal and state level, there should be a co-existence of "Islamic" banks, courts, state-sponsored or subsidized pilgrimages, and other formal institutions. Non-jihadi Salafis, on the other hand, sometimes hold government positions or provide public "advice" to leaders, suggesting that they support electoral politics and a secular system for government.

[62] Ibid.

For Boko Haram, a complete dedication to the concept of Islam is a social blueprint required for participation in politics. “The shari‘a of Islam is a fine and full shari‘a,” Yusuf wrote. It is acceptable at all times and in all places around the world. He lamented;

> *“We see a state in which Muslims are living, but they refuse the Islamic shari‘a in its totality, and put in its place the system of democracy. And we see people with the name ‘ulama’ [scholars] calling for democracy and defending it and making ugly refutations against the people who call others to follow the law of Allah”.*

The disease is unbelief, and as Allah says, “Disorder is worse than killing” (Qur’an 2:191)… Everyone knows democracy is unbelief, and everyone knows the Constitution is unbelief, and everyone knows that there are things Allah has forbidden in the Qur’an, and that is forbidden in countless hadiths of the Prophet, that is going on in Western schools…We haven’t forbidden anything, we haven’t told the Muslim community to abandon anything, we simply stand on the path of truth.

Shekau considered Western-style schooling to be sinful not only because of its academic matter but also because of its political implications. Shekau compared his confidence in God with the National Pledge recited in government schools in one post, telling listeners, “You are worshipping the nation”. The "*disorder*" that the Quran opposes has taken the form of a heretical scheme for Shekau.

The United States' policy toward Nigeria has aimed to strengthen political stability in the region. Nigerian elites and US legislators who backed electoral reform were urged to hold elections peacefully and transparently during the 2011–2015 political periods. As Boko Haram grew in intensity, the US urged Jonathan to encourage socioeconomic growth in the Northeast and stop security forces from abusing civilians and detainees. Given Nigeria's oil reserves and arguable perception of itself as an African superpower, Washington, on the other hand, wields little influence in the region. The United States supported Nigeria to ensure that the conduct of the 2015 general elections was relatively, however, the U.S. encouragement for security sector reforms did not have any major impact. This has also largely been the case since General Muhammadu Buhari took the reins in 2015.

Among Nigeria's neighbors, the US wields more power. American military forces and drones have bases in Niger. The US has provided military training in the region and has given border protection assistance to West African countries such as Nigeria and its neighbors. Countries like Niger and Nigeria were part of President Barack Obama's Security Governance

Initiative, which was set up to strengthen Africa's civilian and military institutions. Both of these efforts are beneficial, but policymakers in the United States should not compromise the integrity in the name of cooperation: if a situation occurs when Nigerien, Nigerian, Chadian, or Cameroonian authorities restrict political space, the US should respond openly, and change assistance as required. More so, the fact that attention is being paid to the insecurity created by Boko Haram's activities should not, however, overshadow attempts to counter Niger and Chad's other, more insidious challenges, such as food insecurity and climate change.

The US should continue to impress on the Nigerian government to reform its security forces in the long run. Furthermore, the US can adopt the use of legal and policy instruments, such as the revocation of visas, to indicate a zero-tolerance policy in Nigeria for bad governance and corruption. Finally, the US should refrain from taking a position or interfering if dialogues ensue between Lake Chad states and any Boko Haram terrorists that are willing to speak.

5. Conclusion & Recommendations

In Nigeria, the insurgency is not a new phenomenon, and it has had far-reaching effects on the nation and its citizens. The government was unconcerned about the Boko Haram uprising, they were treating it as though it were a minor problem that would fade away easily. The government's response to the threat has been poor, alternating between lethal action, appeasement, amnesty, and negotiation. The government has not been able to use its military to fight the Boko Haram insurgency for nearly a decade, prompting logistical support from neighboring countries and a joint multinational task force. A shift toward the restorative and collective justice approaches as part of a counter-terrorism strategy may be vital to a long-term solution. Restorative justice is all about making amends.

In addition, there are new dimensions to the Boko Haram insurgency with the announced partnership with the Islamic State West African Province, (ISWAP) which demonstrates the objective of the Boko Haram group to pursue a caliphate system in the West African region. More studies need to be conducted into how these changing dynamics can be explained theoretically and the impact they will have on the region.

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